

THE ULTIMATE DRAGON WARRIORS ZINE

CASKET OF FAYS

ISSUE FOUR



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THE DEEP DARK WOOD

Bonivant

GM BRIEF – ADVENTURE FOR 4 - 6 1ST RANK CHARACTERS

During the full moon, the party travels near a large forest (Fenring, Jewelspider, or Wistren) to find a hamlet in turmoil. A Beast has emerged from the forest at night to slaughter some sheep. The small settlement of farmers are terrified by the creature and beg the party for help! There is more at stake than a few sheep, however. Hunting down and killing the creature responsible will endanger the party and may anger an ancient forest spirit. The party could resolve this problem simply and amicably, or could make the situation far worse. What will they do?

PLAYER INTRODUCTION

It is a commonly held belief that the full moon carries evil portent, and is when the veil between this world and the fey realm is at its weakest. Spirits and monsters crossing the veil is the source of many a scary tale. You arrive at a hamlet where several mutilated and half eaten sheep have been found. Beast tracks have been found nearby. No more sheep were killed last night, but the farmers are very worried.

THE MISSION

The villagers ask the party to find Rowan, a local Huntsman, to ask him to hunt and kill the Beast. If they cannot find Rowan, they should track and kill the beast themselves, and they will be paid a bounty for the Beast's head.

'Please find Rowan the Huntsman, who lives in the forest. Convince him to hunt and kill the beast. We will pay 20 florins for its head.'

If the party does not accept, the villagers will become desperate and increase the bounty to 50 florins (which is all the money they have!)

THE PURSUIT

The farmers show the party the beast's tracks and the dead sheep. The tracks show a medium sized creature, with four cloven hooves. The sheep carcasses have clearly been attacked by a powerful predator. The tracks are easy to follow for any character with the Track Skill.

The party follows the tracks all day without incident. It is getting dark and they decide to camp. As the party settles, a hunting party of Beastmen attacks the camp (1 Beastman per PC). After a few rounds, or if the fight goes badly for the party, Rowan arrives to drive off the Beastmen. The Beastmen run as soon as Rowan arrives, who shoots to wound only?

THE HUNTER

When the party interacts with Rowan, he agrees the Beastmen must have attacked the sheep (they like mutton, you see). Rowan agrees to hunt them down, and asks the party for help. They rest at their camp peacefully overnight and track the Beastmen at dawn. Rowan takes the party straight to the Beastmen camp, who are still sleeping, and can be easily surprised. The party may decide to slaughter the Beastmen, but Rowan will shoot to wound only. If the party captures a Beastman, they will be unable to communicate with it in any way.

THE END?

If the party 'accept' that the Beastmen attacked the sheep, they can decapitate a dead Beastman, and return to the village by dusk. With the job done, florins in the purse, and some happy villagers, the party can move on to resume their regular campaign adventures.

If the party has inquisitive members, they may piece together the holes in Rowan's version of events. This could extend the scenario, or the party may decide to return later to resolve it?

THE ACTUAL END?

There are several questions about the enigmatic Rowan, and the sheep killing Beast, that the party may want answers to, for example;
The sheep's wounds didn't match the claws and horns of the Beastmen.
Rowan appeared 'just in time' to drive off the Beastmen, without injury?
Rowan knew exactly where the Beastmen were camped, not hiding?
The party easily ambushed and slaughtered Beastmen in a forest?
Rowan, a skilled archer, didn't kill any Beastmen during any of the fights?

What actually happened...

Rowan's teenage son Ash, has reached adulthood and has (unexpectedly) inherited his father's lycanthropy. Ash is a wereboar too, and went on his first rampage during the full moon. This took Rowan by surprise, who was able to catch and contain his errant son, but not before the sheep were slaughtered. Rowan feared that the farmers might do something stupid that could anger Garambar. He suggested a solution to his patron to smooth things over. Garambar was not impressed by the idea, but is even more angered at the thought of men disturbing his peace with fire and iron. The price of a few dead Beastmen is a cheap one in order for Rowan to keep the peace. The party, the farmers, and Garambar, are all happy.

If the party insists on seeking out the actual Beast (Ash), Rowan will do his best to throw them off. If he has to, Rowan will fight to keep his family safe. If the party are still in the woods at dark, they may even get attacked by Rowan in wereboar form! If the party enlist the farmers to hunt down Rowan and/or Ash, this will trigger a response from Garambar! The Lord of Animals will send more Beastmen to drive off the party and farmers.

The outcome is left to the GM's discretion...

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Rowan is a local huntsman who inhabits this forest. As a Huntsman, Rowan controls predators, conserves flora, and ensures game is bred successfully. He lives a simple life with his wife Hyacinth, and children Ash, Rose and Lily. They live alone, isolated from habitation. If Rowan and his family are left in peace, he will not be aggressive but, if attacked, he will fight ferociously to defend his family and lifestyle. Rowan was recruited as a forest guardian by Garambar many years ago, and blessed with the ability of lycanthropy. Rowan is a wereboar.

Garambar is an ancient forest spirit of Ellesland, self-titled the ‘Lord of the Animals’, who values the balance of nature. He has no love for mortal man and ensures their ravages do not encroach into his domain. He likes Rowan though, and chose him as the forest guardian. Garambar is only slightly irritated by the indiscretion of Ash, and hopes Rowan will fix it?

Rowan – 4th Rank Hunter, Str 11 Ref 16 Int 12 Psy 9 Lks10.

Human Stats : Att:17 Def:9 MD:4 Eva:7 Ste:20 Per:10 AF:2 HP:12 Items – Longbow (d8+1, 4) Shortsword (d8, 3). Skills - Track, Bowyer/Fletcher, Precise Shot, , Favoured Terrain (Woods), Favoured Weapon (Longbow), Set Traps, Forage, Stillness, False Trails. **Wereboar Stats** : Att:19 Def:5 MD:3 Eva:5 Ste:13 Per:10 AF:1 HP:24 Gore (d6+3, 8) Charge; Spd 14 (d4+7-AF) damage, stunned for 3 rounds.

Ash is Rowan’s oldest child, and has unknowingly inherited his father's lycanthropy. He experienced his first transformation during the full moon, and in an uncontrollable Wereboar rage, slaughtered the sheep in the village. He will react violently to any threat.

Beastmen are the servants of Garambar, who cross the veil at the full moon to do their master’s bidding. They are afraid of Rowan and will obey him. 1st Rank Ref:08, Str:16, HP:10, 08, 09, 07, 09, 07 Att:14 Def:6 MD:4 Eva 3 Ste:15 Per:12 AF:0 Sword (d8+1, 5)

AMULET OF THE VIRTUOUS HEART

Nigel Ward

This benign sounding necklace is created by ancient and blasphemous magic through a vile and murderous ritual. The amulet takes the form of a small white, vaguely heart-shaped “hag stone”, i.e. a stone with a hole bored through the middle, and is of little obvious value. Its power is of use only to unholy creatures (supernatural, infernal or undead beings). The amulet renders the wearer immune from being driven off by the sight of a crucifix or other holy symbol, grants the ability to traverse sacred or hallowed ground, cross running water, and renders the wearer immune to being exorcised or injured by holy water or relics.

Fortunately the duration of the protective immunity granted by the amulet is temporary, limited to 1d6 hours. Whilst the wearer will not be entirely certain how long their protection will last, the stone will slowly turn from a milky quartz-like white to smoky black as its power wears off – giving some sense of how long the protection will last. Once expired the amulet remains merely an ugly lump of black stone, lacking the traditional powers (e.g. to see invisible creatures) often associated with hag stones.

The ritual of creating the amulet requires a “pure and virtuous” victim (often a child) to bore a hole through the stone. The depraved creator must then recite certain ancient spells whilst heating the stone in a blazing fire. Finally they quench the scalding hot stone in the lifeblood of their unfortunate victim – whom they must slay with their own hand to gather the blood at the moment of quenching. Given the manner of its creation only the most vile and wicked sorcerer would contemplate creating this corrupt bauble.

The origin of this ghastly necklace is lost in the mists of time but it was

certainly known to nefarious magicians from bygone eras. Papyrus fragments, attributed to the great wizard Chefru, suggest an unnamed undead enchanter used such an amulet to enter a sacred Temple of K'nemu in ancient Kaikuhuru. Closer to home, ancient Lughwyd texts mention a traitorous Madhir druid offering such a charm to a troll-Queen in exchange for an unspecified boon. More recently, certain Church scholars speculate that the attempted pillaging of relics from the Church of St Sebastiano in Ferromaine a few years past was carried out by a hellion-possessed minor cousin of the Senfriti family protected by such an amulet. However, money buys many things, including urgent repairs to the church and the silence of the stalwart band of pilgrim knights who successfully defended the church from the infernal assault at great peril.

Adventure hook: The PCs are employed to help transport the young daughter of a wealthy merchant to reside with her aunt before her father embarks upon a lengthy trade voyage. A vile necromancer seeks to kidnap the girl to use her to create an amulet. If they succeed, clues will lead to the sorcerer, if they fail they will face a desperate race against time to stop the murderous ritual from taking place.



BERSERKER RAGE

Wayne Imlach

This replaces 'Bloodrage' from the original rules, replacing it with an ability that gradually becomes more powerful as the Barbarian increases in rank.

As this ability more closely resembles the traditional interpretation of becoming a 'berserker', it is suggested that the original 'Berserk' rule be renamed to something more appropriate, such as 'Aggressive Combat Style', and this rule takes on the true 'Berserk' title.

To summon a 'Berserker Rage' a character must roll equal to or above their INTELLIGENCE on a d20. They may make this roll once per turn, or each time they receive a wound. They may add the damage they received from the wound to the roll.

The character may also receive a bonus to this roll at the GM's discretion, such as when a comrade falls in battle or a sworn enemy is revealed.

Once a character is berserk they must always attack the nearest perceived enemy in melee combat. If no enemies remain, they will attack the nearest friendly character unless they snap out of their rage. To snap out of a berserker rage, at the beginning of the round the character must roll equal to or under their INTELLIGENCE on a d20.

If no foes (friendly or otherwise) are perceived, the Barbarian *must* make the roll to calm down.

Focused Attack

Every point of DEFENCE the Barbarian sacrifices gives a +1 bonus to ATTACK. The maximum bonus that can be gained at this 1:1 rate is equal to their Rank. The Barbarian may not reduce this value until they have snapped out of their rage (they may however increase it at the beginning of any round they are Berserking).

Terrible Aura

The chance of an opponent fleeing in terror at the sight of a Berserker is equal to $(\text{ATTACK Bonus} - \text{Opponent Rank}) \times 10\%$. Ranked professions may double their rank to resist terror (a character of half the rank of the berserker or more is therefore unaffected).

Indomitable Will

Berserkers add their berserk ATTACK bonus to their MAGICAL DEFENCE when resisting mind control spells or effects.

Berserkers also add their berserk ATTACK bonus to their Rank for the purposes of Morale Checks and Fright Attacks.

Enhanced Power

A berserking barbarian increases the damage inflicted by their weapon by 1 point. Armour bypass is unaffected.

Tenacity

A berserking barbarian remains conscious until their HP is reduced below zero by the value of their ATTACK bonus. So a Berserker with +8 to ATTACK would only fall when their HP is reduced to -8.

Note that if a barbarian is at -3 HP or less, and magical healing is not applied beforehand, they will die from their wounds as soon as they snap out of the berserker rage or lose consciousness.

Optional: Augmenting Attack Further

If the players and GM are comfortable with the slightly increased calculation required, a barbarian in a Berserker Rage who has used as much DEFENCE as his Rank allows may still transfer any remaining points of DEFENCE to ATTACK at the rate of 3 to 1 by using the default 'Aggressive Combat Style'. This can be used to maximise their chance of striking true, but at the cost of leaving themselves open to counter-attack. These additional points can be adjusted on a round-by-round basis, unlike the 1:1 points which cannot be reduced until the rage subsides.

BARON ALDRED OF GORBURN

Bonivant

Aldred is an interesting and compelling fellow indeed. He is a veteran of the Crusades and a capable Commander. His fiefdom is the largest in Albion, but is mostly inhospitable fenland and dense forest. His neighbours include the enigmatic ‘Elfin’ Earl Montombre and the aggressive Baron Grisaille of Wincaster. He strongly polarises the opinions of his peers, and his influence across Albish society is much higher than his feudal position suggests.

Aldred is a giant of a man, standing six foot tall and broad shouldered. He has a shock of brown hair, with a great bushy beard, his green eyes sparkling with intellect. Even in his 50’s, he is an imposing figure, matched by his indefatigable nature and booming voice. Aldred does not suffer fools gladly however, and has been known to settle an argument in the Lists rather than using more diplomatic means. The council of the Lady Elise, and his observance of the True Faith, have often soothed his temper.

Aldred is a devoted husband and Lady Elise has borne him three healthy sons. Almeric is the apple of Aldred’s eye, but the eldest son and heir is impetuous and arrogant in equal share. Aldred is both enthusiastic and disappointed with his eldest son at the same time. Surely the only way that Gorburn can survive and flourish amid the conspiratorial machinations of Montombre and Grisaille is for Almeric to reach his full potential quickly.

Whenever I picture Aldred in my mind, the image of Brian Blessed is indelibly burned there. A subtle blend of Prince Vultan from Flash Gordon, and King Richard IV from Blackadder reflect how I imagine Aldred perfectly. A wily old warrior, too clever to be lured into a trap, but too stubborn to refuse the opportunity of a good fight. His sense of survival is balanced by his sincere faith, profound sense of honour, good humour and courage.

Baron Aldred of Gorburn, Nobleman of Albion.

Male, 8th Rank Knight, on the Commander Pathway

Attack 22 (23 with +1 sword)

Stealth 15

Defence 16 (17 with +1 sword)

Perception 8 (Normal)

Magical Defence 11(13 Iron Will)

Health Points 20

Evasion 5

Movement 10m (20m)

(Strength 14, Reflexes 12, Intelligence 16, Psychic Talent 10, Looks 13)

Abilities: Ride Warhorse, Armour Expert, Track, Iron Will, Intimidation, Silent Signal, Prepared Ambush, Inspirational Leadership.

Languages: Elleslandic (Native), Chaubrette (Intermediate), Kurlish (Basic), Bacchile (Basic). Aldred is literate in all these languages.

Equipment: Aldred has amassed a variety of weapons and armour from his previous campaigns. At any given time he is carrying;

a +1 Sword (d8+1, 5) made for Aldred by Malcolm the Smith of Pillarton,

a Plate harness made by the Master Craftsman of Starfall (AF6), which is twice as thick as most plate but without the weight encumbrance, giving a non magical bonus,

Heater Shield with the Arms of Gorburn, a Dagger, a Purse of 50 Florins and his personal Signet Ring of the House of Gorburn.

Other items of note include the Golden Spear of Garambar +2 (2d4+2, 6). This is the spear seen in ‘The Sins of the Father’ and is kept locked away in the castle vault, until Almeric ‘borrows’ it.

The vault in Castle Gorburn contains a few thousand florins.

MAGICAL TATTOOS & SCARS

Brock

The druids of the barbarian peoples living in what are now Ellesland and Chaubrette were able to draw tattoos on the bodies of willing people of the tribe and then to imbue those tattoos with magic to provide some protection in combat.

A Rank 4 Elementalist could imbue tattoos with an Armour Factor of 1.

A Rank 8 Elementalist could imbue tattoos with an Armour Factor of 2.

(There are stories of greater protection being possible, but this might be purely the stuff of legend.)

For the tattoos to be effective they had to be visible, so the bearer had to cast off most (if not all) their clothes to benefit from the Armour Factor. Magical tattoos were therefore incompatible with armour of any kind; if armour is worn then only the armour's AF will count.

As well as offering some protection against weapons and magic, the tattoos offered protection against bruises, scratches, and some weather effects (e.g. hail), but do not protect against long-term exposure to long-term weather effects (e.g. cold or damp); the northerners thus had to wrap up warm despite the magic adorning their bodies.

The inscribing of such tattoos is almost a "lost art" in the northern lands of 10th Century Legend, but a similar magic persists in the uncharted lands of the Mungodan continent.

Ritual Scarring

Scarring their bodies according to tribal designs, some peoples of Mungoda are able to imbue their body with a natural Armour Factor. The effect is exactly the same as that described above.

The heat and humidity of Mungoda which make heavier armours rare and uncomfortable have ensured this ritual magic has retained a purpose it gradually lost in northern lands.

Game Notes

Only Elementalists can imbue tattoos or scars with protective magic and, of these, only a minority know the necessary rituals. Earth Elementalists seem to be the principal practitioners of this craft, although the skill is not exclusive.

The ritual takes a full day (to inscribe the tattoos or scars) and one night (to imbue the design with magic). It can only be performed on nights of the full moon. The Elementalist must have his full Magic Point allocation in his primary element, which is then fully expended in casting the ritual.

Inscribing tattoos causes 1d4 Health Points damage which must be allowed to heal naturally or the magic within the tattoos will be damaged and lost. Ritual scarring must also be allowed to heal naturally, but causes 2d3 Health Points damage.

It is possible to improve the magical protection gained from AF 1 to AF 2. The process is risky; there is a 5% chance the magic will tear into the bearer's body and kill them.



THE BARBARIAN PROFESSION - CULTURAL VARIANTS

Wayne Imlach

These rules offer a slightly more varied take on the Barbarian profession, which as it stands only really represent the stereotypical Mercanian or Thulish warrior and doesn't comfortably reflect barbarians of other cultures.

Three new skills are added to the mix - Expert Swimmer, Horse Archery & Master Slinger.

Expert Swimmer

An expert swimmer can move far more confidently through the water, and moves up to 5m per combat round at full stroke. He can hold his breath for twice as long as a normal person (rounds equal to Strength score x2), and when swimming encumbered deducts only half the usual penalty. When making swimming rolls, an expert swimmer may use Strength or Reflexes (whichever is higher) to determine success.

An expert swimmer can fight aquatic enemies with half the usual penalty; they suffer -2 to Attack and -4 to Defence.

Horse Archery

The warrior may fire a normal bow from horseback (or indeed any moving platform) with no penalty. Attempting such a feat without this skill halves the archer's Attack score (before taking into account further penalties due to range or illumination). This skill can only be taken if the warrior can ride warhorses and is also a Master Bowman (and is normally only available to barbarians of the Eastern Steppes in any case).

Master Slinger

This skill is exactly the same as the Master Bowman skill, but covers the use of slings rather than bows.

Cultural Skill Adjustments

The basic attributes of the profession (such as Attack, Defence etc.) remain unchanged from the published rules. However, the homeland of the Barbarian determines their starting skills. Note that Wearing Medium Armour (can wear up to AF4 with no penalty), Berserk, Track and Ride Warhorse are no longer abilities exhibited by all Barbarians universally!

Some limited skills of the mighty are available from 8th rank onward - one may be chosen every 'other' rank (8,10,12, etc). Main Gauche is now available to Barbarians as a 'Skill of the Mighty', but cannot be used in conjunction with Berserk or Bloodrage, for obvious reasons. A few Barbarians have access to skills normally outside of the Knight or Barbarian profession – Climb, Unarmed Combat, Arrow Cutting and Adepthood. These are treated exactly as the original skills.

Wear Light Armour signifies that the Barbarian can wear armour up to AF3 with no penalty and Wear Medium Armour indicates they can wear armour up to AF4 with no penalty.



Nationality	Starting Skills	Skills of the Mighty
Mercania	Expert Swimmer, Berserk, Wear Medium Armour	Ride Warhorse, Bloodrage, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Thuland	Track, Berserk, Wear Medium Armour	Ride Warhorse, Bloodrage, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Eastern Steppe	Track, Wear Light Armour, Ride Warhorse, Master Bowman, Horse Archery	Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Gnawing Wastes	Track, Berserk, Wear Light Armour, Master Bowman	Ride Warhorse, Bloodrage, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Trackless Ooze	Expert Swimmer, Track, Wear Light Armour, Climb, Berserk	Bloodrage, Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Emphidor	Expert Swimmer, Track, Climb, Wear Light Armour, Master Slinger	Ride Warhorse, Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Harogarn	Track, Wear Light Armour, Arrow Cutting, Unarmed Combat	Ride Warhorse, Adept Hood, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Drakken Peaks	Expert Swimmer, Track, Wear Light Armour, Climb, Master Bowman	Ride Warhorse, Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Kiakuhuru	Track, Berserk, Wear Medium Armour	Ride Warhorse, Bloodrage, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Zhenir	Ride Warhorse, Berserk, Medium Armour	Track, Bloodrage, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Azure Coast	Expert Swimmer, Track, Wear Light Armour, Climb, Berserk	Bloodrage, Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Thanagost Peaks	Track, Wear Light Armour, Weaponskill Spear, Master Slinger	Ride Warhorse, Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Mungoda	Track, Expert Swimmer, Climb, Master Slinger, Wear Light Armour	Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill
Cosh Goyope	Track, Expert Swimmer, Climb, Master Bowman, Wear Light Armour	Wear Medium Armour, Main Gauche, Weaponskill

PROPHECY IN DRAGON WARRIORS

Stephen Keightley

While there are many rules options that cover Prophecy, most only deal with pure game mechanics. These rules are perfectly acceptable to be used as-is, just like any other class feature, spell or ability without any further effort if impact on mechanics is all you are looking for.

However, this approach does not address the impact of the actual prophecies themselves. These are largely a function of the narrative of a story, and so are not covered by the crunchy parts of the rules. It is this part that is necessarily left for the GM and player to manage in the Role Play.

Each time a character uses prophecy, have the player (or GM if an NPC) make a statement about the near future. The statement should be about a specific outcome but vague in the details of how it comes about, and the consequences of the outcome. When doing so, they should keep the prophecy they make ‘personal’, involving the actions of themselves or their closest allies and known enemies. They should also try to make the timeframe quite tight.

In other cases, it is more useful for the GM to feed prophecy to the player, describing what they ‘see’. The GM can thus foreshadow key events of the adventure or campaign. Unless the GM has a very specific outcome in mind, they should allow the player to interpret the descriptions for themselves, leaving room for misunderstanding to impact on the narrative.

When applying rules modifiers, it is suggested that the GM be given the right to indicate when and if it is appropriate to the prophecy to do so. While this adds a layer of complexity to any fortune telling ability, it helps to generate the feeling that the words of the prophecies matter as much as the rules behind them.

Real world history is rich with examples of prophecy. There are many great examples from the medieval and ancient world that you could use to model your own. I have found this article particularly useful in understanding prophecy in Medieval England: [Before 'Fake News' Came False Prophecy](#).

The Seer: A New Path for the Mystic Profession

The holy sites of Pre-Selentine Legend were mostly natural features; often hilltops, thermal vents, water springs or the like. In ancient times they were usually tended by a mystic with the gifts of healing and prophecy. Following the arrival of the True Faith, the old gods of the natural places generally receded into the background, and the roles of their keepers mostly transitioned into holy hermits of the True Faith.

The Seer can see the future, and their ability to divine what is to come allows them to nudge at the edges of fate. Their core ability allows them to pre-roll and bank results to bring about prophesied outcomes. Subsequent abilities bolster their allies with advice and otherworldly powers. Full details of this character path, available to Mystics of 3rd rank and above, will be found in a future issue of Casket of Fays.



SHADRICK AND HIS WATERSKINS

Chris and Stella Meacham

Shadrick has a mop of dark curly hair, reaching near 5 and a half feet in his boots, and could be described as lithe in his youth. He hails from Glissom, as all the best wanderers and storytellers do, but took for the adventuring life after a to-do with an ivy covered wall, a window and a bonny lass.

Shadrick turned his hand to many things on his travels. Trying to earn coin or a place to feel at home, he has taken up with many companions over the years, one being the notable Captain Sergio of the ship La Bella, and she is a beauty, that ship, to be sure. It was on that very ship, that Shadrick came closest to death and it was no adversary that laid him so low, it was the sea herself who tossed the ship and twisted her rigging 'til the rage washed out of the waves and she came to calm, far too calm, not a breeze to be had for all the sailors charms or prayers to God, yet it was a single man who'd kept the majority of the sailors alive, Captain Sergio.

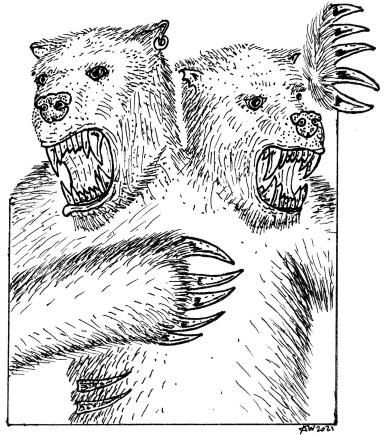
Captain Sergio had a special gift. Shadrick watched the man in secret and turned his mind to the wondrous things he saw, when their luck turned and they were saved, Shadrick chose to stay in Clyster when La Bella moored for repair, and took work where he could, entertaining, drinking, gathering knowledge of strange things and perfecting his obsession.

Shadrick's Waterskin – Shadrick can make a special two pint waterskin, and could be commissioned to make one of these, should you find him. A prized possession to sailors and adventures alike, the price is high due to the time it takes to craft them. The leather for the skin must be tanned from the pelt of a magical creature. Shadrick is willing to buy such pelts and skins, no questions asked. These skins can be filled with any water, including salt water and urine and it will purify into suitable drinking water. Up to four pints may be purified in a 24 hour period.

TROLLBEAR

Andrew Wright

Legends speak of the many monstrous horrors that stalk the uncharted depths of the Svartgard Forest, one of the most brutally terrifying being the hideous Trollbear, a foul and fey amalgamation of Troll and Bear, whose horrific origins are perhaps best left unknown. Though initially they may appear to be simply a large Bear, at close quarters their inherent weirdness becomes apparent; rolling bloodshot eyes, mangy, parasite-infested pelts, and a thinner, rangier, almost man-like form.



The missionary-priest Thunric, in his journal *Northern Exertions and Exhortations*, noted the aftermath of a Trollbear attack on a village of reindeer-herders along the shores of the Rymchaeld Sea:

“...the air was rent with screams of the dying and injured. Corpses lay where they had been slain and eviscerated, entrails glistening in the cold air, barely eaten and killed purely for sport. One hunter, propped up against a hut, stared at me dully with one remaining eye until it glazed over and his soul departed, the other half of his skull having been bitten clean off. As he died, he moaned softly: ‘Kauhu, kauhu...’ - ‘the horror, the horror...’ in his native speech.”

In recent times, knowledge of the full extent of the Trollbear’s habitat range has increased dramatically. They are now known not only from the Gnawing Wastes and surrounding environs, but also Yggdras Isle, the Kingdom of Wyrð, the blasted heaths of Krarth and the lonelier fjords of the Flint Knives. A white-furred polar variant has even been encountered on icebergs floating as far west as Thuland. The reasons for such an expansion are currently unknown but may be linked to a similar rise in the numbers of local Troll populations, preying in turn on a proliferation of the establishment of new human settlements across northern Legend.

Attack 18
Defence 9
Magical Defence 5
Evasion 4
Stealth 12
Perception 6 (Normal)

Health Points 1d10+20
Claws d8, 3
Armour Factor 1 (Thick Fur)
Movement 10m (25m)
Rank Equivalent 6th

Due to their unnatural origins the Trollbear will be afflicted with some kind of twisted mutation or another. Roll a d6 and consult the table below to determine the type and effects of this loathsome perversion.

1	Extra Heads – Roll a d6: 1-4 one extra head; 5-6 two extra heads. For each extra head, add +1 to Attack, Defence, Health Points and Perception.
2	Bear Hug – The Trollbear has particularly long arms and big fangs. A critical hit counts as a bear hug, as the Trollbear grapples its victim and gnaws on their flesh. The victim suffers 10 HP damage, armour notwithstanding.
3	Weapon Resistance – The Trollbear has inherited the Troll’s resistance to non-metallic weapons such as cudgels and staves. It can only be harmed by iron or steel weapons.
4	Magic Resistance – The Trollbear has inherited the Troll’s resistance to sorcery. It has a Magical Defence score of 11.
5	Acid Drool – Every fifth round the Trollbear will vomit forth a cascade of bilious yellow drool on the nearest opponent within 5m, with a Speed of 13. This will cause d6+1 HP of damage, and while armour may protect as normal, the acid will destroy non-magical armour the victim is wearing.
6	Mutant! – Roll twice on this table, ignoring further rolls of 6.

Note: The Trollbear originally appeared in the Dragon Warriors rulebook (p. 158)

CHEVAL DE FRISE

Brock

A 'cheval de frise' was a medieval defensive anti-cavalry measure consisting of a portable frame (often just a log) with many projecting long spikes or spears. These simple anti-cavalry measures remained in use right up to the 19th Century. The device is designed to break up a cavalry charge and to provide cover for troops behind. In game terms, these things can force characters to stop and try to work their way round, potentially taking several extra rounds of missile fire, before closing with their enemy.

It is generally not possible to jump over a cheval de frise. They are made specifically to stop horses and their size would almost certainly impale a horse if it tried. Most horses, seeing the row of sharpened stakes, would simply baulk at such an attempt (possibly throwing the rider).

The cheval de frise is effectively a trap. Horses can go from a gallop to a dead stop in no time at all, so it would be a check on Reflexes to see if the character doesn't get thrown onto the cheval de frise. Difficulty factor to avoid being thrown is 14 from a galloping horse, 12 from a horse going at a canter. (If using the skills from the Players' Guide, reduce these difficulty factors by 2 if the character has Advanced Cavalry skill.)

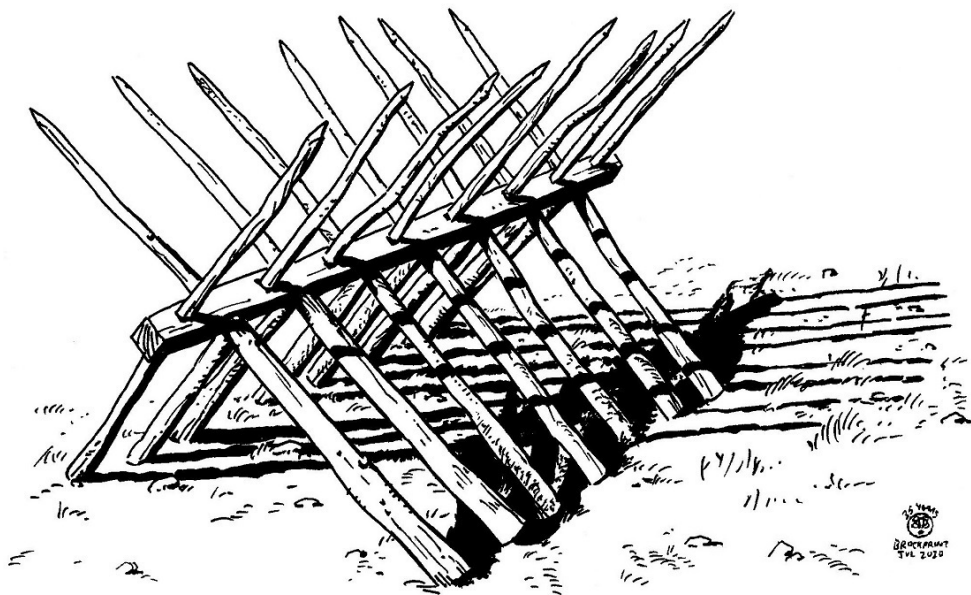
If a character gets thrown into the cheval de frise, he takes 0-3 (roll 1d4 -1) spear attacks ('0' because it's possible to be lucky and fall just short of the stakes). As the cheval de frise has only sharpened stakes (rather than metal spear-heads), the impalements are (2d3, 4) each (similar to the wooden spears of the Ushok in Sleeping Gods, pg. 80 / DW book 6, pg. 254).

If the character's steed is galloping/charging at the time he encounters the cheval de frise, add +1 to both Armour Bypass and Health Point damage due to the added momentum of the throw i.e. 0-3 impalements at (2d3+1,

5). A character who is thrown and misses the stakes would still take 1d6 Health Points damage (-2 if wearing armour) from falling from a fast moving horse.

If the horse didn't see the cheval de frise (or was somehow urged onto it), it would need to make a Reflexes check to avoid it or suffer 1-3 impalements (2d3+1, 5).

NOTE: for Dragon Warriors the cheval de frise is an obstacle designed to delay PCs (while being shot at by defenders, if any are present), or to force them to find a way around. They are big things and generally easy to see (although placing them behind a corner could lead to a nasty surprise). The tight row of sharpened stakes should be a deterrent to trying to simply push through and the rules are there as a last resort for those that insist on trying.



Susuk Magic

Damian May

In the culture of the Thousand Islands, Susuk, or charm needles, are items made of gold or other valuable materials, which are inserted into the soft tissues of the body to act as talismans.

Susuk has various purposes, ranging from purely aesthetic, to the treatment of joint pains and other minor ailments. This practice is also used as protection against injuries and accidents.

Susuk are embedded accompanied by different incantations for each purpose and traditionally done at certain times of the year to increase its effectiveness.

Susuk needs to be removed before death or the person will have difficulty truly dying, the practitioner who first placed the Susuk (or another who knows the relevant Spell) simply performs the spell again to remove it.

Susuk Healing (Sorcerer spell – level 1)

Range: Touch

Casting Time: 4 rounds.

This spell restores 4 Health Points to a wounded character. It will not increase their Health Point score above their normal (unwounded) level. The cost of the spell is 4 Crowns worth of Susuk needles which are permanently inserted under the skin, leaving no marks. This spell can only be cast on someone three times during their lifetime.

Susuk Protection (Sorcerer spell – level 4)

Range: Touch

Casting Time: 10 minutes

This spell permanently adds + 1 to the receivers Evasion or Defence, determined by the caster. The cost of the spell is 10 Crowns worth of Susuk needles and a 50 gp gem, both of which are permanently inserted under the skin, leaving no marks. This spell can only be cast on someone three times during their lifetime.

Susuk Glamour (Sorcerer spell – level 6)

Range: Touch

Casting Time: 10 minutes

This spell permanently adds + 1 to the receiver's Looks. The cost of the spell is 50 Crowns worth of Susuk needles and a 100 gp gem which are permanently inserted under the skin leaving no marks.

If the items are not removed before death the Susuk bearer will rise from the grave after three days as one of the undead, depending what rank they were when they perished: 1-4 Ghoul, 5-7 Barudath, 8-9 Spectre, 10 + Vampire.

AT THE COURT OF KING HADRIC – STAVROPOL

Chris Meacham

Stavropol is the Emphidian ambassador to Hadric's court. A heavy set man with thick curly black hair and beard, he enjoys his food and, more so, his drink. Most often wearing robes, these bear the stains of past meals, more so after Stavropol has been in his cups. Recently Stavropol's inebriation led to a diplomatic incident, stemming from an insult to the 'Kurland Sausage'. The Kurlish Ambassador was outraged and petitioned the King, who settled things between the two. There is still resentment on both sides.



LASH

Christian Hagga

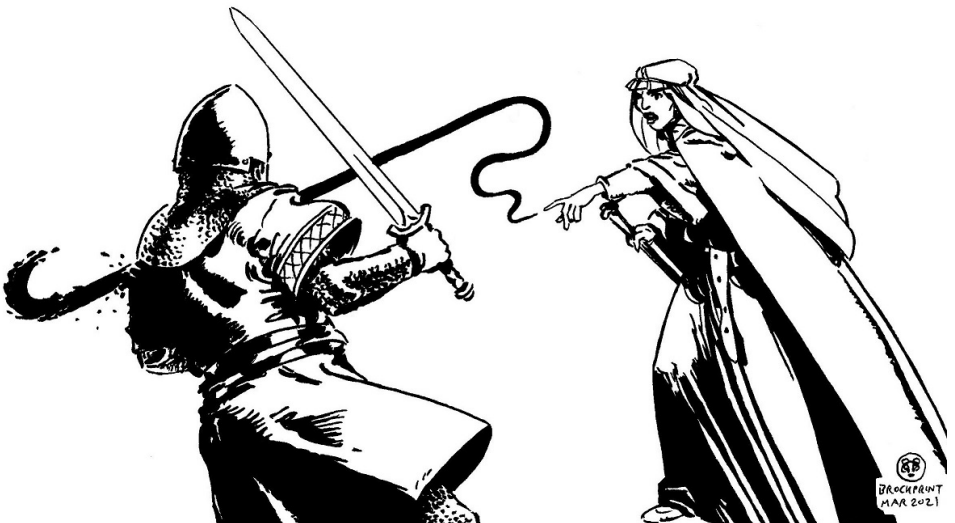
Lash (Sorcerer spell – level 1)

Range: 10m

Duration: Instantaneous

Rarity: Uncommon in Krarth, rare elsewhere

The caster draws on otherworldly ectoplasm to form a dark, whip-like tendril, which immediately strikes out towards a single target. The tendril strikes with an Attack of 17, rolls 1d10 for Armour Bypass and inflicts 1d6+2 points of damage before dissipating into acrid-smelling mist. This spell is reputed to have originated in Krarth, centuries before the Blasting of Spyte; a way to enforce obedience in slaves and the lower classes.



KEY TO THE DARK LABYRINTH

Lee Barklam

The Key to the Dark Labyrinth is an exotic talisman unique to the Lands of Legend. The key's sinister protection banishes any who would strike the owner to a labyrinthine realm of confusing other-dimensional passageways, cursing them to wander lost through a tangle of twisting hallways until they chance upon one of the few silvery portals that will return them to Legend. As one of my players was unfortunate enough to fall foul of the key's curse, I am taking a break from my series inspired by Mortal Combat to instead bring some flavour of my campaign to the pages of the Casket.

Shadows race towards you from every corner of your vision until you are consumed by a disorientating darkness. With a nauseating lurch, your sight returns and you find yourself in an enclosed passageway of rough-hewn grey stone. The ground is hidden by a knee-deep shroud of opaque mist, within which dark shadows dart seemingly at random below the surface before disappearing just as quickly into thick pockets of the obfuscating vapour. Draughts of stale air breathe lazily through the passageway, barely disturbing the surface of the white fog and carrying with them the smell of dust, decay, and foetid earth.

Despite no obvious source of light, you can see clearly the muted monochromatic palette of dreary greys with which this realm is painted – the only colour you can see is that which you have brought with you: dyed into your clothes, the ruddy tone of your skin, and the brown of your trusty axe's haft.

Confused by how you got here or where you are, you cannot learn anything more by staying still and start to move through the labyrinth. You attempt to scratch the wall with your dagger to mark your trail but the walls resist any attempt to mar their rough surface and, despite your efforts to remember your route, the tortuous geometries of this place defy your ability to keep track. As you rove through ever-more-confusing hallways

and feel panic begin to well within you, you are suddenly calmed by a memory of a story your uncle once told you as a child.

Your uncle spoke of a nightmare realm beyond the borders of the world. Within this realm, a sprawling labyrinth of impossible dimensions would ensnare unwary explorers until they could find one of the shimmering mirrored portals that would lead them to freedom. Until then, those doomed to wander the maddening corridors of such a place should consider themselves lucky if they only starve to death, for stalking the corridors of this place are the eternal Lords of the Labyrinth, hunting for offerings to bring back to the Court of the Dark Queen at the heart of the maze.

Despite the unsavoury content of your uncle's stories, you always remember them – and him – fondly. You were always comforted by his voice and his presence, however nightmarish his stories may have seemed superficially. His story of this labyrinthine realm reminds you of that cold winter's evening in front of the hearth, bathed in the cosy heat of the flames as the gentle tone of your uncle's words relaxed you. You remember that feeling of being safe and carefree and wonder if that, all those years ago, might not have been the last time you felt that way.

But that feeling of calm quickly fades as the hopelessness of your predicament weighs heavily on your sanity and is replaced by growing angst and desperation that drives you to hurry through the web of immemorable granite hallways in a race to find one of those silvery portals before one of the Lords of the Labyrinth finds you...

And for anyone that wants to explore the Dark Labyrinth for themselves, the Pavilion in the Cobwebbed Forest offers a family-friendly labyrinthine experience to visitors: <https://cobwebbedforest.co.uk/Apps/Labyrinth.php>



THE MEAD HALL

Shaun Hately

The Mead Hall (properly named The Axe of God) is a tavern that lies between The Sheath and Limits Lane in Ongus' Bridgewater Ward. It is notable as a favoured drinking haunt of visitors to the city from Thuland and Mercania, and even further afield – a place without the airs and graces of so-called civilization where a warrior can get a good drink without having to worry about offending some knight who thinks that manners makyth more of you than strength of arms alone. As the name implies, good, solid, strong mead is the drink of choice in this place but ale is available for those who want it, and you can get wine as long as you do not treat it as anything more fancy than a way to get yourself drunk.

Eirik Bearbane, of Mercanian extraction, is the proprietor. Now elderly he claims to have travelled the world as a younger man but denies that he ever participated in raids on Ellesland – at least he denies it while sober. He opened his tavern about ten years ago, purchasing two neighbouring buildings and knocking a door between them. One of the old buildings comprises the common hall of his tavern, which has a hearth at its centre surrounded by wooden tables and chairs, whilst in one corner a long bench served as a bar. The walls are painted with murals depicting snow-capped mountains and the sky above, and the ceiling is also painted to resemble the night sky with its constellations, but this is all difficult to see as the atmosphere is dark and smoky – Bearbane blocked up all the windows and the central fire can only vent its smoke through a hole in the roof above. Heavy rain has been known to extinguish the fire. Barrels of mead, ale, and cheap wine can be found behind the bar.

The second building has a store room (likely used to store even more mead) and three small private rooms that can be occupied by those willing to pay – the rest of the space is a common room where patrons of the tavern can sleep on the floor at night if they choose, or for a small fee can hire one of the cots stacked in the corner. No staff stay on the premises

overnight unless they are still tending the bar – Eirik himself has a house in a nearby street.

One of the city’s ancient public latrines is almost across the road from the front of the tavern and its proximity means that Eirik has felt no need to provide any such facility himself.

This is a place for drinking, not for fine dining, but a cauldron of stew is kept on the fire as part of the tradition of stone soup common in Ongus.

STONE SOUP

Shaun Hately

Many – although not all – taverns in Ongus practice the tradition of ‘Stone Soup’ – that is, a large cauldron of a thick soup or stew, generally referred to as scumgullion or slumgullion, that is kept cooking constantly on a fire, for all to share. Those who can afford it are expected to pay for a bowl – a copper penny will do, but if you can afford more, even two pennies is viewed with kindness. It is understood – and sanctioned – by the Church, that paying more than a penny is a penance that will buy off some of your time in Purgatory. Payment in kind – putting something in the pot – a carrot or a turnip, ham, or some mutton, any wholesome food is just as good as money. If you cannot pay, no person is denied a bowl – the stone soup tradition is part of the way that Ongus makes some effort to ensure that people do not go hungry. The name derives from an old story that allowed people to place a stone in the pot if they had nothing else. Today it is considered better that nothing is added at all, rather than a stone from the street outside.

The stone soup tradition can also be found in other parts of Albion and there are some reports of it being found on the continent as well, although the residents of Ongus tend to doubt that this is true — they see it as a particular tradition of their own great city.

THE QUARRY AND THE HUNT

Tom Clare

A far hunting horn comes echoing from out across the moor.

Ten minutes later, without warning, a man bursts from a tussock and falls across the path in front of the party. His fine clothes are torn and dirty, and his eyes are wild. He stares unseeingly at them, then staggers to his feet and takes off again almost immediately, being lost to sight among the hillocks and bushes.

If the party stops at this spot for more than a few minutes they are startled again by a pack of hounds, as white as death, and eerily silent. The hounds run around and between the party, and vanish into the bushes.

The horn comes again, nearer this time. Those with a high Psychic Talent will feel that something uncanny is coming. And then a party of wild riders will erupt from the empty moor.

The horsemen are all in red finery, that's cut in an alien – almost violent – manner with ragged edges and beribboned tatters flying as they pass. You have the brief impression of bestial masks or helmets... Their steeds are snowy white, but with red muzzles, and you (the PC with the highest Psychic Talent) get the horrible idea that they are red with wet blood...

Each PC has one chance to react before the riders are gone. If they address the riders, they will hear mocking laughter coming back to them in the wind. If they attempt to strike one of the riders, that person will subtly avoid the attack, then casually aim a blow at them with the blunt end of a spear shaft or an empty hand (Attack 18; (1d3, 2 damage)), knocking them to the ground.

Then the awful riders are gone, and the PCs are alone on a desolate moor. No trace of the hunt can be found (though there are plenty of bogs for those that wish to search). Half an hour later they may hear a distant cry of anguish. But perhaps it is just some moorland bird.

S'ASABONSAM

Damian May

The S'asabonsam originates from the forests of Southern Mungoda, but can also be found all along the Western Coast of the continent as well; wherever there are forest trees big enough to support them. Little is known about this creature outside of the local tales and folklore, which are thought by Coradians and Ta'ashim alike to be prone to exaggeration and contradiction.

The creature is described as larger than a man, with short, stubby arms, large blood-shot eyes, and long, thin but strong legs. It is said to have fiery red twisted hair, with a long neck, and prehensile clawed feet, with a reported wingspan of up to 6m. Much note is made of its viciously sharp teeth. S'asabonsam are rarely seen, but tales warn folk to be on guard, lest the S'asabonsam catch the unsuspecting passerby and drag them to a treetop to suck their blood..

Often called Vampires, because of their blood-drinking habits, the S'asabonsam is not undead, but rather a living being called upon by powers within the forest to guard a certain grove of trees or ward people away from a sacred area. S'asabonsam are not adverse to simply satiating their hunger with anyone who happens to walk by, though.

Because of the fear of S'asabonsam, the sacred onyina tree is usually left alone to grow to enormous heights and width in the forest.



It is believed that S'asabonsam were originally natural beings, enormous predatory bats, that acquired a deadly and fae nature from their interaction with the forest spirits and gods.

The stubby hooked arms of the S'asabonsam which it is said to hang from are actually the folded up wings of the beast, and its legs and hooked foot claws hang down and snatch passing prey to be decapitated by its sharp jaws, and its body drunk dry of blood.

Found only in jungles large enough to support their roosting trees these predators are not above taking prey as large as Volucres, Humans or Gorillas.

When seen outside of the shadowy forest the S'asabonsam is revealed to be a strangely stretched example of a massive, russet furred bat with large red eyes, a long snake-like neck, vicious knife-like teeth, and long storkish legs ending in hook-like talons. Those acting as guardians are often given 1d4 blessings from their patrons protecting them, granting extra abilities or adding to their attacks.

Sample blessings bestowed on guardian S'asabonsam include:

- Immunity to normal weapons.
- Shapechange to Human-form.
- Bite carries a random disease.
- +1 dam/ +2 dam/ +3 dam to Jaws attack.
- Can cast one spell of 1st-4th rank from the Darkness/Air/Earth Elementalist spell list/day.
- Regenerate 1 Health Point/round.

Attack 16

Defence 8

Magical Attack N/A

Magical Defence 3

Evasion 7

Stealth 12

Perception 12 (Panoptical)

Health Points 2d6+10

Jaws (d8,6)

Armour Factor 1

Movement 10m (20m)

Rank Equivalent : 4th

FIMBÜLWINTER

Lee Barklam

Element: Water (Level 2)

Range: Self

Duration: Spell Expiry Roll applies

This spell encloses the caster in a 2m-radius zone of icy coldness (to which he is immune). This can be detected by the appearance of frost on the ground, water vapour in the air as the caster breathes out, and so on. Anyone entering the zone is immediately subject to a Magical Attack. If they fail to resist, the numbing cold confers a -2 Attack, -1 Defence, and -1 damage to their melee attacks.

Even if the character then exits the zone, the numbing cold effect remains until the spell expires.

Darkness: Anyone succumbing to the cold also suffers 1HP damage per round they are in the zone (this stops if they leave, unlike the other effects).

Online Resources

DW Facebook – www.facebook.com/groups/2321315414820351

The Great Library of Hiabuor – www.libraryofhiabuor.net

The Cobwebbed Forest – www.cobwebbedforest.co.uk

Wimlach's Blog – wimlach.weebly.com/dragon-warriors.html

DW Discord Server – <https://discord.gg/eX4qehk>

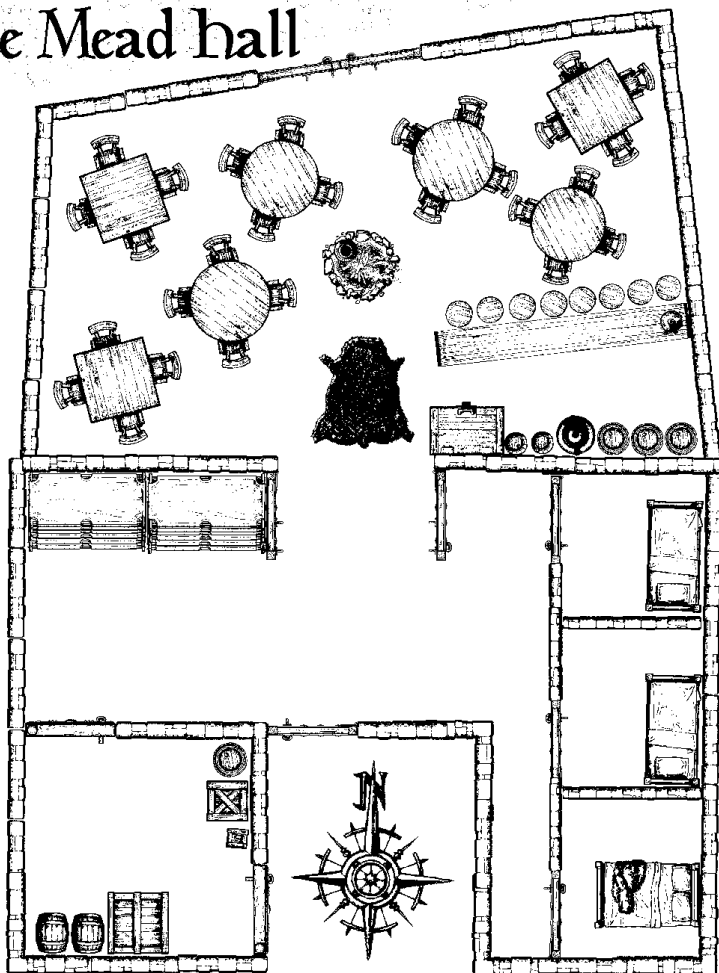
Dave Morris' Patreon – www.patreon.com/jewelspider



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THE SHEATH

The Mead hall



0 6
Scale in Meters

0 20
Scale in Feet

LIMITS LANE